

a digital image storage unit having an image sensor for capturing an image, said image sensor located along a second optical axis, said digital image storage unit located between said first and second body tubes, said second optical axis being separate from said first optical axis, said digital image storage unit providing a second field of view which is substantially similar to said first field of view.

10. The binocular telescope of claim 9, wherein said digital image storage unit further includes a memory for storing said image.

11. The binocular telescope of claim 10, wherein said memory is flash memory.

12. The binocular telescope of claim 9, wherein said digital image storage unit further comprises:

a microphone to receive an analog audio signal;

an analog-to-digital conversion circuit, coupled to said microphone, to convert said analog audio signal to a digital audio signal; and,

a memory, coupled to an output of said analog-to-digital conversion circuit, for storing said digital audio signal.

13. The binocular telescope of claim 12, wherein said digital audio signal is provided to a personal computer.

14. The binocular telescope of claim 9, further comprising a port to be connected to a personal computer, where said image is provided to a personal computer from said digital image storage unit through said port.

15. The binocular telescope of claim 14, wherein said port is a universal serial bus port.

16. The binocular telescope of claim 9, further comprising a display panel coupled to said digital image storage unit, said display panel to display said image from said image sensor of said digital image storage unit.

17. The binocular telescope of claim 16, wherein said display panel is a liquid crystal display (LCD) panel.

18. The binocular telescope of claim 16, further comprising a semitransparent reflective element, where said image displayed on said display panel is viewable through at least one of said first and second eyepieces by orienting said reflective element along said first optical axis, orienting said display panel substantially perpendicular to said first optical axis, and directing said image as displayed on said display panel in the direction of said at least one of said first and second eyepieces using said reflective element.

19. The binocular telescope of claim 18, further comprising a first viewing mode and a second viewing mode, said image to be displayed on said display panel during said first

viewing mode, and said image to not be displayed on said display panel during said second viewing mode.

20. The binocular telescope of claim 19, wherein during said first viewing mode, at least one of said first and second objective lenses is shielded and the image displayed on said display panel is the only image viewable through a corresponding one of said first or second eyepieces.

21. A method of viewing an image, having a first field of view, comprising:
viewing the image using (i) a first body tube having a first eyepiece and a first objective lens, said first eyepiece located at a proximate end of said first body tube and said first objective lens being located at a distal end of said first body tube, and (ii) a second body tube having a second eyepiece and a second objective lens, said second eyepiece being located at a proximate end of said second body tube and said second objective lens being located at a distal end of said second body tube, said second body tube being oriented substantially parallel to said first body tube, said first and second body tubes being oriented along a first optical axis, said first and second objective lenses each having a focal length for focusing on objects at mid range; and
capturing the image, said image having a second field of view substantially the same as said first field of view, through an image sensor located in a digital image storage unit, said image sensor located along a second optical axis, said digital image storage unit being located between said first and second body tubes, said second optical axis being separate from said first optical axis.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising storing said image in a digital format in a memory of said digital image storage unit.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein said memory is flash memory.

24. The method of claim 21, further comprising:
receiving an analog audio signal;
converting said analog audio signal to a digital audio signal; and,
storing said digital audio signal in a memory of said digital image storage unit.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising providing said digital audio signal to a personal computer.

26. The method of claim 21, further comprising providing said image to a personal computer.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein said image is provided to said personal computer through a universal serial bus connection.

28. The method of claim 21, further comprising providing said image from said image sensor of said digital image storage unit to a display panel, and displaying said image on said display panel.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein said display panel is a liquid crystal display (LCD) panel.

30. The method of claim 28, further comprising viewing said image displayed on said display panel through at least one of said first and second eyepieces by orienting a semitransparent reflective element along said first optical axis, orienting said display panel substantially perpendicular to said first optical axis, and directing said image as displayed on said display panel in the direction of said at least one of said first and second eyepieces using said reflective element.

31. The method of claim 30, further comprising switching from a first viewing mode to a second viewing mode, where said image is displayed on said display panel during said first viewing mode, and said image is not displayed on said display panel during said second viewing mode.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein during said first viewing mode, at least one of said first and second objective lenses is shielded and the image displayed on said display panel is the only image viewable a corresponding one of said first or second eyepieces.

33. The method of claim 21, wherein in said field of view is substantially a rectangular field of view.

34. The method of claim 33, further comprising providing said image to a personal computer, said image to be displayable by said personal computer in said rectangular field of view.

35. A binocular telescope comprising:

a first body tube having a first eyepiece and a first objective lens, said first eyepiece located at a proximate end of said first body tube and said first objective lens being located at a distal end of said first body tube;

a second body tube having a second eyepiece and a second objective lens, said second eyepiece being located at a proximate end of said second body tube and said second objective lens being located at a distal end of said second body tube, said second body tube being oriented substantially parallel to said first body tube, said first and second body tubes oriented along a first optical axis to provide a first field of view;

a digital image storage unit having an image sensor for capturing an image, said image sensor located along a second optical axis, said digital image storage unit being located between said first and second body tubes, said second optical axis being separate from said first optical axis, said digital image storage unit providing a second field of view which is substantially similar to said first field of view;

a display panel coupled to said digital image storage unit, said display panel to display said image from said image sensor of said digital image storage unit; and

a semitransparent reflective element oriented along said first optical axis, where said image displayed on said display panel is viewable through at least one of said first and second eyepieces by orienting said display panel substantially perpendicular to said first optical axis, and directing said image as displayed by said display panel towards said at least one of said first and second eyepieces using said reflective element.

36. The binocular telescope of claim 35, wherein said digital image storage unit further includes a memory for storing said image.

37. The binocular telescope of claim 35, further comprising a port to be connected to a personal computer, where said image is provided to a personal computer from said digital image storage unit through said port.

38. The binocular telescope of claim 35, further comprising a first viewing mode and a second viewing mode, where said image is displayed on said display panel during said first viewing mode, and said image is not displayed on said display panel during said second viewing mode.

39. The binocular telescope of claim 38, wherein during said first viewing mode, one of said first or second objective lenses is shielded and the image displayed on said display panel is the only image viewable through a corresponding one of said first or second eyepieces.

40. A method of viewing an image, having a field of view, comprising:
viewing the image using (i) a first body tube having a first eyepiece and a first objective lens, said first eyepiece located at a proximate end of said first body tube and said first objective lens being located at a distal end of said first body tube, and (ii) a second body tube having a second eyepiece and a second objective lens, said second eyepiece being located at a proximate end of said second body tube and said second objective lens being located at a distal end of said second body tube, said second body tube being oriented substantially parallel to said first body tube, said first and second body tubes being oriented along a first optical axis;
capturing the image, said image having a second field of view substantially the same as said first field of view, through an image sensor located in a digital image storage unit,

said digital image storage unit being located between said first and second body tubes, said second optical axis being separate from said first optical axis;

displaying said image from said image sensor on a display panel; and

orienting a semitransparent reflective element along said first optical axis,

orienting said display panel substantially perpendicular to said first optical axis,

and

directing said image displayed on said display panel towards at least one of said first and second eyepieces using said reflective element.

41. The method of claim 40, further comprising storing said image in a digital format in a memory of said digital image storage unit.

42. The method of claim 40, further comprising providing said image to a personal computer.

43. The method of claim 40, further comprising switching from a first viewing mode to a second viewing mode, where said image is displayed on said display panel during said first viewing mode, and said image to not be displayed on said display panel during said second viewing mode.

44. The method of claim 43, wherein during said first viewing mode at least one of said first and second objective lenses is shielded and the image displayed on said display panel is the only image viewable through a corresponding one of said first or second eyepieces.